

to liberate Americans and bring them together, not hold them back.

And that's what I want to happen to California. Look at this sea of faces here. You are America's present and America's future. Now the children will not only be able to access the Magna Carta and the Declaration of Independence, they will be able to, how uncomfortably it might be, follow how Congressman Miller and Senator Boxer vote—[laughter]—and send E-mail to me and the Vice President, telling us what mistake we have made that day.

To the younger people in this audience, I hope you will never forget this day. Someday your children will marvel at the idea that there ever was a classroom without a computer. You can tell them you were a pioneer. Just as our parents and grandparents built our schools and libraries and highways for their children, you will leave your children a legacy of opportunity along the information superhighway.

The 21st century is America's for the taking if we are bold enough and strong enough and confident enough to go forward together. We will make the best of this new technology together. We will educate our children with it, improve our businesses with it, make our Government more democratic with it, and build a brighter, freer, more prosperous future with it. That is the American way. Let the future begin.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:04 a.m. at Ygnacio Valley High School. In his remarks, he referred to Paul Allen, superintendent, Mount Diablo School District; Lt. Gov. Gray Davis of California; Brian DeGrassi, student, Ygnacio Valley High School; John Gage, director, science office, Sun Microsystems; Michael Kaufman, director, information services, KQED; and Charlie and Margie Merrill, NetDay volunteers.

The President's Radio Address

March 9, 1996

Good morning. Today I want to talk about our economy and about the progress we're making, and how to keep our economy moving forward.

When I ran for President I said we could create 8 million new jobs over the next 4 years if we followed the right strategy, if we followed the strategy of giving all Americans a shot at the American dream by reducing the deficit and investing in the education and training of our people, in the new technologies of the future, in our communities, and in our commitment to open markets with more fair and free trade.

Well, we've followed that strategy for 3 years now, and yesterday we had some terrific news. Last month America came roaring back from January's blizzard to create over 700,000 new jobs. That's the best single month of job creation we've had since 1983, in the middle of President Reagan's first term. That means that in just 3 years and 1 month, America has created 8.4 million new jobs, even better than I predicted back in 1992.

Unemployment is down to 5.5 percent. It's been under 6 percent now for 18 months in

a row. Four years ago America was only creating an average of 27,000 private sector jobs a month. Now we've averaged 211,000 a month since I became President. I'm proud of that, but this is America's achievement, and all Americans should be proud of it.

Our administration has helped by pursuing our economic strategy. We fought for tough, serious deficit cutting. Four years ago the deficit was \$290 billion and heading higher. Today it's down to \$164 billion. It's the smallest percentage of any major economy in the world, and that means lower interest rates for business loans, for home mortgages, for car and credit card payments. That's one of the reasons we've had a record number of new small businesses in each of the last 3 years, and we're at a 15-year high in homeownership.

We've worked overtime to expand trade, giving American businesses access to millions of new buyers around the globe with 200 separate trade agreements. For the first time in years American exports to consumers around the world are growing faster than imports to this

country. In fact, our exports are at an all-time high.

We've invested in America's workers so they can learn the skills they need to get and keep the high-paying jobs of the information age. And we've invested in the education of our children and our young adults, in the new technologies we need to grow the economy and help our defense industries to transform and protect the environment while we create jobs. And we've invested in our communities that have been left behind in the mark of economic progress. We've also been able to give tax cuts to a significant number of working families—17 million of them with incomes up to \$28,000 a year.

This strategy is working. But we still have more to do. We have to build on the progress we've made and keep this economy moving forward. And the very first thing we need to do is to finish the job we started back in 1993. Let's eliminate the deficit completely and balance the budget over the next 7 years in a way that upholds our values and advances our economy.

I have proposed a detailed plan to balance the budget, to provide a modest tax cut to working families, and to keep our commitments to Medicare, to Medicaid, to education, and the environment. In the last few months the congressional leadership and I have spent hours and hours negotiating together. There are now enough cuts common to both Republican and Democratic plans that we could balance the budget tomorrow. It is time for Congress to put politics aside and get this balanced budget done.

Meanwhile we need to pass the rest of this year's budget and restore the deep cuts in education and the environment that Congress has made in the continuing resolutions it has passed after the two previous Government shutdowns.

I have shown Congress a way to restore the investments for education and the environment and still keep cutting spending in this year's budget. But in a new twist, some in Congress have offered to reduce their cuts in education for our children and the protection of our envi-

ronment this year if I will agree to even harsher cuts on health care for the elderly and for poor children. Now, we don't need to cut any of those efforts beyond the hundreds of millions of dollars in savings we've already both identified.

These savings this year permit us to avoid harsh cuts in education and the environment on the one hand, and in health care for the elderly and for poor children on the other. A deal to trade education spending for Medicare cuts is no deal at all. It's wrong to choose between our parents and our children, leaving hard-pressed working families squeezed in the middle and undermining our economy through reduced investments in education.

I want to work with Congress, but we don't need to do things which will undermine our ability to support our families through Medicare and Medicaid, or undermine our ability to protect the environment, or undermine our ability to grow our economy and raise the incomes of all Americans through investments in education. And there should be no threat—let me say again—there should be no threat of another Government shutdown. It was wrong the first time. It was wrong the second time. And three wrongs certainly don't make a right.

I know we can balance the budget in 7 years, provide a tax cut to the families who need it, and uphold America's values by honoring our commitment to each other. We can support work and family, we can have more opportunity and more responsibility if we will work together.

Now let's get on with it. The American job engine is in high gear. It's not time to slam on the brakes or make the same old wrong turns. Let's do the right thing for the American people and keep our economy moving forward. That's why we're here.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:57 p.m. on March 8 in the briefing room at Harman International Industries in Northridge, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 9.